



MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer  
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Chief Administrative Officer  
County Counsel

At its meeting held June 1, 2004, the Board took the following action:

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Supervisor Yaroslavsky made the following statement:

“On March 5, 2004, District Attorney Steve Cooley issued a letter to each member of the Board of Supervisors indicating that as a result of budget curtailments, and an evaluation of critical staff needs within his office, he could no longer afford to dedicate staff exclusively to code enforcement cases, and that the District Attorney’s (DA) Code Enforcement Section would be disbanded effective April 1, 2004. District Attorney Cooley advised us that beginning April 1, 2004, code enforcement cases would have to be filed in the DA’s regional branch or area offices that serve the geographic area in which the violation occurred. This action is likely to result in the weakening of the County’s code enforcement efforts, which protect the quality of life and improve the health and welfare of our unincorporated communities.

“On April 27, 2004, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) issued a report to the Board outlining a number of options to improve the County’s code enforcement efforts. The CAO in consultation with County Counsel and the Directors of Planning and Public Works, suggests that the County focus its efforts on developing an upgraded civil approach to code enforcement using the provisions of State statutes that permit civil legal actions in order to develop and implement a more effective civil code enforcement process, including restraining orders and injunctions, as well as the levy of civil penalties to the maximum extent possible.

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“The Chief Administrative Officer also recommends the creation of a code enforcement unit in County Counsel. The following code enforcement services would be required:

- Review and develop proposed amendments to the County Code to include the maximum civil remedies possible under State law, as well as to provide consistency between the various County Code sections that are enforced by the multiple involved departments;
- In partnership with the Chief Administrative Office and code enforcement departments, develop common processes, forms and other tools that will provide a consistent, interdepartmental code enforcement system, and develop protocols for convening multi-departmental code enforcement strike teams for the most severe and complex code enforcement cases;
- Provide training and ongoing consultation with field enforcement personnel;
- Conduct office conferences with violators and file civil litigation when appropriate;
- If agreement can be reached with the DA, deputize members of the Office of County Counsel to directly file criminal prosecutions of code violations; and
- Necessary personnel as determined by County Counsel to be estimated at three attorneys, a paralegal and a secretarial position in order to provide an appropriate level of service to meet the expectations outlined above. The cost for the unit is estimated to be \$592,847.19 per year.”

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Therefore, on motion of Supervisor Yaroslavsky, seconded by Supervisor Knabe, unanimously carried, the Board took the following actions:

1. Directed the Chief Administrative Officer to request the District Attorney to deputize County Counsel staff members in order to allow for the direct filing of criminal prosecutions of code violations;
2. Directed the Chief Administrative Officer and County Counsel to develop a proposal including required ordinance amendments for enhancement of the County's civil remedies which may be utilized to achieve code compliance, and report back to the Board within 90 days; and
3. Referred the matter of funding a Code Enforcement Unit within County Counsel to the Board's Fiscal Year 2004-05 Budget Deliberations, scheduled to begin June 21, 2004, and directed the Chief Administrative Officer to provide a funding recommendation for this purpose in the final Fiscal Year 2004-05 Proposed Budget adjustment recommendations.

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Copies distributed:  
Each Supervisor  
District Attorney